

Message Text

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PAGE 01 DAMASC 00612 031432Z

47

ACTION NEA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

TO FAS USDAO WASHDC

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 6135

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

UNCLAS DAMASCUS 612

TOFAS 13

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAGR, SY, LE, JR

SUBJ: WINTER GRAIN SITUATION

REF: FASTO CIR 36

1. SYRIA. FIRST OFFICIAL GRAIN AREA ESTIMATES WILL BE MADE MARCH/APRIL. THEREFORE, AGATT APPRAISAL 1976 GRAIN SITUATION BASED PRIMARILY ON OFFICIAL AREA AND YIELD ESTIMATES 1970/75. AGATT ESTIMATES WHEAT AREA AT 1.6 MILLION HA AND YIELDS AT 1 METRIC TON PER HA. BARLEY AREA ESTIMATED AT ONE MILLION HA AND YIELDS AT 800 KILOS PER HA. RAINFALL AND WEATHER CONDITIONS VERY FAVORABLE FOR SOWING AND DEVELOPMENT GRAINS THROUGHOUT ENTIRE MAJOR GRAIN REGIONS. CROPS STILL FACE CRITICAL PERIODS MARCH/APRIL WHEN LACK OF MOISTURE, COLD WEATHER AND HOT DRY WINDS CAN AFFECT YIELDS DRAMATICALLY.

2. JORDAN. NO OFFICIAL GRAIN AREA ESTIMATES AVAILABLE FOR 1976 CROPS AND 1975 FINAL ESTIMATES STILL TO BE RELEASED. FOR LACK OF BETTER INFORMATION AGATT ESTIMATES BASED ON 1974 DATA AND OBSERVATIONS MADE DURING RECENT VISIT. AGATT ESTIMATES WHEAT AREA AT 200,000 HA AND YIELDS AT 750 KILOS PER HA. JORDANIAN WHEAT AREA SUFFERING FROM INSUFFICIENT RAINFALL DURING AND SHORTLY AFTER PLANTING.
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LIGHT RAINS IN MOST AREAS DURING LATE JANUARY MOST HELPFUL,

BUT MORE RAIN NEEDED IN FEBRUARY TO ASSURE AVERAGE YIELDS,
NOT TO SPEAK OF CONTINUED FAVORABLE WEATHER THEREAFTER.
BARLEY AREA ESTIMATED AT 60,000 HA AND YIELDS AT 500 KILOS.

3. LEBANON. AGATT MAKING INQUIRIES AND WILL REPLY ASAP.

4. NEW REVIEW OF GRAIN SITUATION WILL FOLLOW IN SCHEDULED
REPORTS DUE FAS/W 2/15. AGATT UNABLE TO MEET 2/15 DEADLINE,
BUT WILL POUCH REPORTS ASAP.
MURPHY

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